

St. Louis River Area of Concern

*Projects in partnership to restore the river
and revitalize the community*

Howards Bay Sediment Cleanup

Purpose

Howards Bay is an industrial embayment located next to Connor's Point in Superior, WI. The bay has been and continues to be important for Lake Superior commerce. It's been home to shipyards, grain terminals, commercial fishing operations, and other industries for well over 100 years. This history of industrial use has polluted sediments in the bay.

Investigations show that the sediments are polluted with lead, mercury, tributyltin and PAHs. These pollutants increase costs which makes routine dredging impractical and limits access for large vessels over time. These same pollutants also pose a threat to the ecosystem and human health. They hinder aquatic life and degrade habitat for fish and wildlife. In addition, some pollutants like mercury enter the bottom of the food chain and become concentrated in species higher up the chain, including the fish people eat.

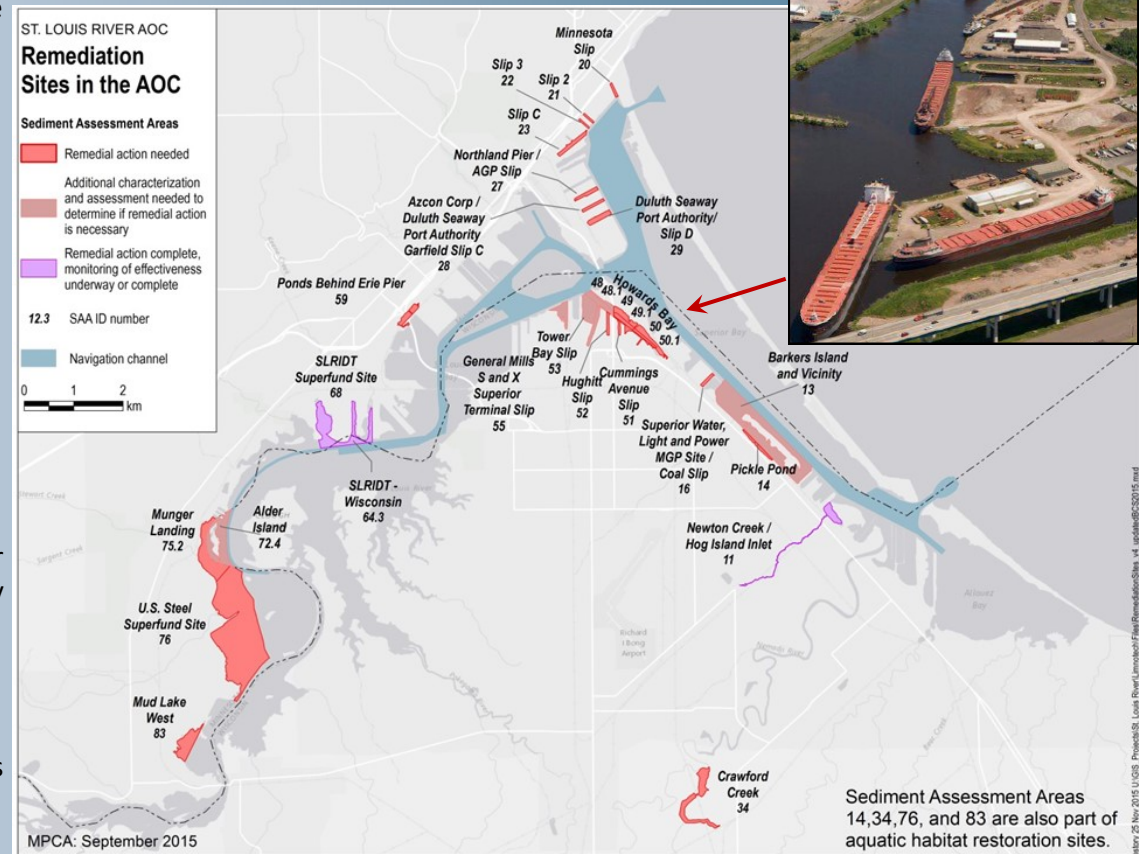
The sediment cleanup will remove restrictions on dredging and other impairments. In result, the bay will continue to serve commerce while also providing important habitat for fish like musky and northern pike as well as migratory waterfowl.

Background

This project combines the resources of federal, state, local and private partners to carry out navigational dredging in the shipping channel and safe cleanup of the contaminated sediment at one time.

Major funding for the cleanup portion is provided by the US EPA through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Great Lakes Legacy Act. Fraser Shipyards and the Wisconsin DNR are also major funders for the cleanup project. The City of Superior will provide in-kind support by providing a place for excavated dredge material. The US Army Corps of Engineers serves as the main contractor for the overall project, as they maintain the shipping channel in the St. Louis River, including portions of Howards Bay.

The design will be completed in 2019, and the sediment cleanup work is anticipated in 2019/2020. The cleanup will take approximately 12 months to complete.



Status

The plan includes multiple actions to realize objectives for navigation and sediment cleanup. The shipping channel will be dredged to a depth suitable for large vessels. The material will be taken by barge to the Erie Pier Processing and Reuse Facility. A combination of dredging and placement of a sand cover will be used to clean up contaminated sediment. Dredged material with levels of contamination that are safe for recreational development will be beneficially used to improve the cap and cover at the closed Wisconsin Point Landfill. Material that is not suitable for recreational development will be disposed of at a licensed landfill.

Benefits

- Address contamination in Howards Bay
- Restore navigation depths in Howards Bay
- Beneficial reuse of dredge material
- Improve landfill cap, help protect environment around landfill
- New recreation area in Superior
- Leverage available federal funding
- No major cash contributions by City
- Support local businesses and workers

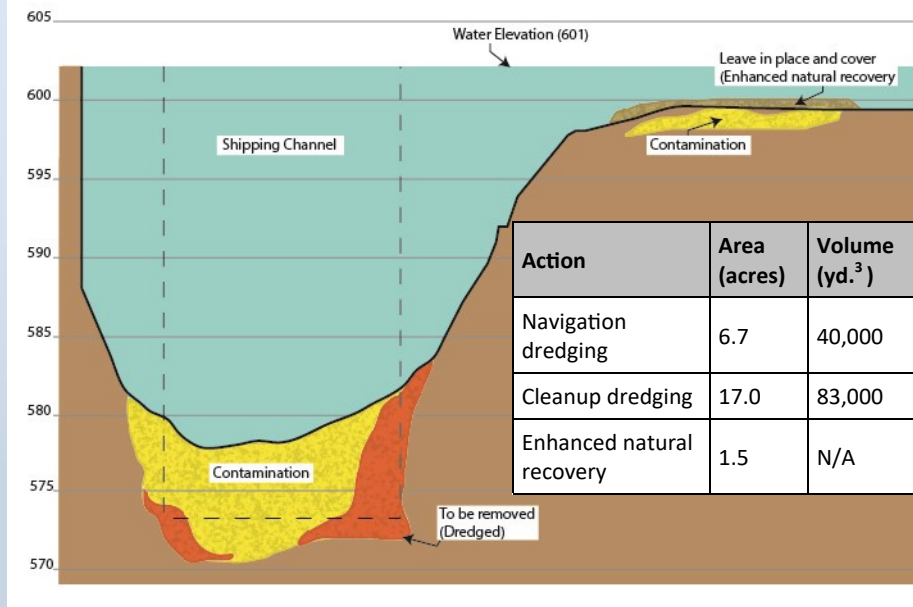
Partners

- Fraser Shipyards, Inc.
- City of Superior
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. EPA

To Learn More

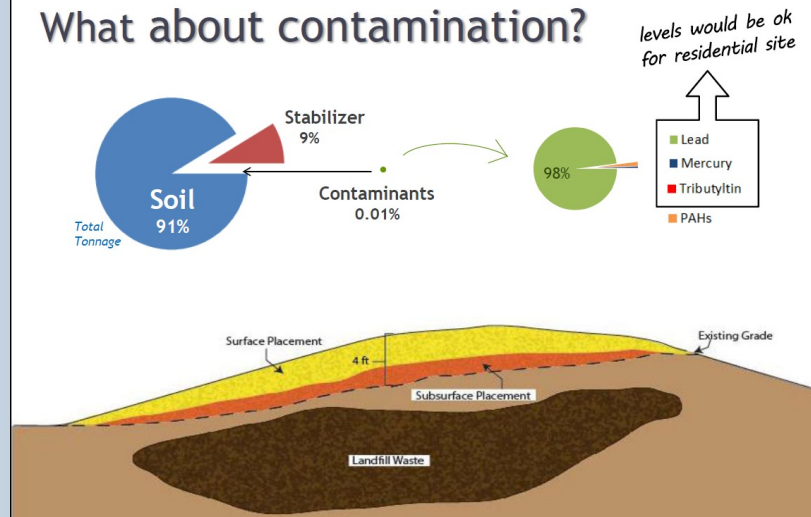
Visit dnr.wi.gov, search "[St. Louis River AOC](http://dnr.wi.gov)"

<http://www.greatlakesmud.org/howards-bay---st-louis-river-aoc.html>



Beneficial Use of Cleanup Dredged Material at Wisconsin Point Landfill

What about contamination?



Office of Great Waters



For more information, contact:

Joe Graham, Sediment & Monitoring Coordinator
WI Department of Natural Resources, Spooner
715-635-4075, Joseph.Graham@wisconsin.gov

February 2019